

HUMANITIES

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NETWORK

The Humanities and the Survival of Community

Robert N. Bellah

It is a great honor to be asked to give the 1989 Public Humanities Lecture and I am grateful to the California Council for the Humanities for the invitation and to California State University, Fullerton, for being our host tonight.

When I used the phrase "the survival of community" in my title, I intended to invoke a sense of urgency. All is not well in our society and in our world, and tonight I want to suggest both what some of the dangers are and some of the things we can do about them. I am using the word community in a broad sense—not just the intimate associations of family, friends and neighbors, school and church, important as they are—but including local communities, sometimes of large size, and the nation and even the world as communities. Some people use the word "society" for what I am calling community. In any case the key defining element that makes a community is that it is based on common moral understandings, and that these understandings depend on the use of language to make them work.

Communities, even quite intimate communities, are not necessarily based on monolithic agreement about even quite important moral matters, but on a willingness to go on talking, to reach workable compromises even when total unanimity is impossible. When I was young and political party identities were quite important, I had an uncle who was a Republican married to an aunt who was a Democrat. It was a very long and successful marriage, but every four years the decibels of discussion got uncomfortably high. The Germans have a rather expressive term for what I am here calling community or society: *Lebenswelt*, "life-world." According to the greatest living German social philosopher, Jurgen Habermas, the life-world is organized around moral norms reached through the use of language.

Now, in contrast to community as I am using the term, there are two other spheres in the modern world that have a great deal to do with our lives but do not necessarily depend on the use of language to reach moral agreements: the economy and the administrative state. In principle, the economy and the state are instruments to serve the ends of the people—in a democratic society, of the citizens. Indeed, in principle, they can only operate legitimately so far as they work within a structure of laws which express the moral commitments of the community. But we know that in the modern world the economy and the state have become so powerful that they often turn the money and power which are supposed to serve the common good into ends in themselves. Indeed money and power in the hands of gigantic economic and administrative structures can threaten the life of communities to the point where their very survival is endangered.

"The key defining element that makes a community is that it is based on common moral understandings, and that these understandings depend on the use of language to make them work."

We are fairly clear about this danger when it comes from the state. Indeed our criticism of Communist societies for decades has emphasized that the state has been too coercive and has reached far too deeply into the daily lives of the people. The gigantic struggles going on in many Communist societies today show that the state has not been as successful as some Communists and some anti-Communists believed. Czeslaw Milosz, in a 1985 interview, puts the issue in terms close to mine. He said,

"The importance of the movement in Poland, of Solidarity, is that it is not just a Polish phenomenon. It exemplifies a basic issue of the twentieth century. Namely, resistance to the withering away of society and its domination by the state. In the Poland of Solidarity, due to some historical causes, there was a kind of resurgence, or renaissance, of society against the state.

Quite contrary to the predictions of Marx, instead of withering away, the state, like a crab, has eaten up all the substance of society. Destroying society, as a matter of fact. As a worker's movement, Solidarity resisted this. Whether various societies which have



Panelist Swan Ngin shares a light moment with Public Humanities Lecturer Robert Bellah.

been conquered by the state will awaken in the future, I don't know. Poland presents a hopeful pattern."

In America we may comfort ourselves that we have long been aware of the dangers of the state and that we have protected our society or community from the state through constitutional provisions such as the Bill of Rights and many legal restrictions on arbitrary state action. Still it would be unwise ever to forget that we, too, are threatened by the arbitrary actions of the state. Just this week the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported that a fifteen-year-old boy was apprehended in his home by INS officers and taken to Mexico, without a chance to call his father or a lawyer, even though his father is in this country legally. We know about such cases and we express our outrage, but they continue and will continue until we manage to put the proper legal restraints on the INS.

A far more serious example is the way in which Lyndon Johnson manipulated Congress into passing the Gulf of Tonkin resolution which was a critical step in involving the United States in a terrible war, planned and executed by a small group of high administrative officials, without either public approval or adequate Congressional oversight. And the cost of that war in damage to the life of our communities, to our life-world, was enormous and we are still paying for the consequences.

But tonight I want to concentrate on another danger to the survival of community in America, one we are much less aware of than the danger from the state, and so one we need to be especially vigilant about. That is the danger from the economy. Milosz spoke of the state eating up the substance of society. I want to suggest that the economy can also "eat up the substance of society." Jurgen Habermas puts the danger in another striking phrase. He says that the administrative state and the economy can "colonize the life-world."

continued on page 4



Robert Bellah delivers the 1989 Public Humanities Lecture, "The Humanities and the Survival of Community" at the Ruby Gerontology Center auditorium at CSU Fullerton.

JUNE GRANTS AWARDED

Dissemination of the Humanities

America and the the Geography of Hope

Sponsor: Western Heritage, Berkeley
Project Director: Stephen Fisher
*Amount of Award: \$15,000 in matching funds if
\$30,000 in outside gifts are
raised*

For over five decades, novelist and historian Wallace Stegner has been a towering figure in American letters. He has written about the mythic West vs. the factual West and how the mythic images affect our thinking today; he has written about the history of resource issues and about the need for long-range thinking influenced by historical insight. This television special about his life and work will show how Stegner, a respected humanist, relates his scholarly concerns to contemporary social and political issues. The program will air on PBS in the spring of 1990.

Bob Kaufman, Poet

Sponsor: Pacifica Radio/KPFA-FM, Berkeley
Project Director: David Henderson
Amount of Award: \$10,000 in outright funds

Bob Kaufman is the least well-recognized poet of the Beat Generation, yet he was one of the most influential. This project will create a radio documentary and audio anthology of Kaufman's life and work. Two one-hour segments will be broadcast on public and community stations nationwide.

Changing Our Minds: The Story of Dr. Evelyn Hooker

*Sponsor: Foundation for Integrative Studies,
New York*
Project Director: James Harrison
*Amount of Award: \$15,000 in matching funds if
\$30,000 in outside gifts are
raised*

Evelyn Hooker's research is considered among the most socially relevant work in modern psychology. Today it provides the basis for the development of public health strategies based on science rather than ignorance. This one-hour documentary film about her work will use interviews and archival and documentary footage to illustrate the effect one woman's work has had on American society. Anticipated broadcast date is June of 1990.

De Peliculas

Sponsor: Installation Inc., San Diego
Project Director: DeeDee Halleck
Amount of Award: \$5,000 in outright funds

This 35mm feature-length film examines the images in U.S. media of the nations, people and cultures south of our border, how the images came about, and how they continue to be a part of the very history they portray. The film makes use of original pictures and sounds

which embody the attitudes and expectations of the U.S. public from 1898 to 1944 including newsreels, travelogues, dramatic films, military films, magazine illustrations and political cartoons. Anticipated release date is September 1990.

Public Art, The New Deal Murals

Sponsor: Alternative Media Network, New York
Project Director: Peter K. Hill
*Amount of Award: \$9,945 in outright funds and
\$14,608 in matching funds if
\$29,216 in outside gifts are
raised*

The walls of public buildings across the country were once the canvas for America's most extraordinary experiment in government patronage of the arts. Dramatic images of the American experience were created for the walls of post offices, schools, libraries, hospitals, and federal buildings across the country. This one-hour film will explore the history and the legacy of the New Deal mural programs; it will include interviews with artists and scholars, archival film, and footage of murals from around the country. Anticipated release date is February 1990.

Rock and Hawk: The Life of Robinson Jeffers

Sponsor: San Jose State University Foundation
Project Director: Alan Soldofsky
*Amount of Award: \$19,200 in matching funds if
\$38,400 in outside gifts are
raised*

Robinson Jeffers is a poet whose visionary writings awakened the nation to the archetypal beauty and power of the California coast. The landscape of Big Sur and the Monterey Peninsula was at the core of his poetic imagination, inspiring his poetry as much as did his marriage to Una Cull Kuster. This one-hour film on his life and work will use documentary and dramatic techniques to illuminate and make accessible his works. The film will be aired nationally on PBS television after it is completed in June 1990.



Super Chief — The Life and Legacy of Earl Warren

Sponsor: The Caticus Corporation, Berkeley
Project Director: Bill Jersey
*Amount of Award: \$10,000 in matching funds if
\$20,000 in outside gifts are
raised*

This ninety-minute documentary film will provide a historical overview of the career of Chief Justice Earl Warren, his impact on California, and his influence on the Supreme Court. The film will combine historical footage, photographs, and newspaper accounts with interviews of experts in the fields of history, law, and social criticism. It will create a context for viewers to understand and assess the importance of ethics, jurisprudence, the future of the Court and its continuing impact on their lives. The national television premiere will be October 1989.

Zulay Facing the 21st Century

*Sponsor: University of California
Department of Film/Television,
Los Angeles*
Project Director: Jorge Preloran
*Amount of Award: \$10,000 in outright
funds and \$2,570 in matching
funds if \$5,140 in outside gifts
are raised*

This ninety-minute film focuses on the experience of a woman who immigrates to the United States and faces the need to balance material gains with her spiritual losses. The film explores the significance of the forces of the new and the old land while they are influencing the immigrant's decision to remain in this country or to leave. The film, which began in 1981, will be completed in October 1989.

Humanities in California Life

Dorothea Lange: A Visual Life

Sponsor: Pacific Arts Entertainment, Berkeley
Project Director: Meg Partridge
Amount of Award: \$10,000 in outright funds

This sixty-minute film will document the life and work of Dorothea Lange, the innovative California photographer who recorded some of the most evocative images of the twentieth century. Lange chronicled an era of great social upheaval in her images of the Depression, the dustbowl farmers, and the internment of Japanese-Americans. She was a pioneer in the area of photo-documentation and this film will view her work in the context of the times.

Migrant Mother, Nipomo, California, 1936. Photo taken by Dorothea Lange, a pioneer in the area of photo-documentation and the subject of a film project sponsored by Pacific Arts Entertainment, Berkeley.

JUNE GRANTS AWARDED

M.F.K.

Sponsor: Bay Area Video Coalition, San Francisco
Project Director: Barbara Wornum
Amount of Award: \$10,000 in outright funds

This one-hour film will chronicle the life of American writer Mary Frances Kennedy Fisher. In this autobiographical documentary, the eighty-year-old Fisher will have the opportunity to look back over this century and discuss her life and her work. She has lived in California most of her life, and her stories and essays together with her wealth of experience provide insight into the California environment and culture as it has developed from the early part of the century. This grant is for script development.

The San Francisco Stage: From Gold Rush to Earthquake

Sponsor: The Archives for the Performing Arts, San Francisco
Project Director: Stephen Cobbett Steinberg
Amount of Award: \$7,500 in outright funds

The Archives will produce a five-part lecture series beginning in November 1989 focusing on key events and figures of the early San Francisco stage. The lectures will be presented on Monday evenings and topics include the contributions of black minstrels, Chinese theatrical performers, and women dancers and singers such as Isadora Duncan, Lotta Crabtree, and Lola Montez. The lectures are part of a project which also includes an exhibition in the Archives' gallery and a scholarly catalogue on the history of the origins of the San Francisco stage.

The Spanish Missions and California Indians

Sponsor: D-Q University, Davis
Project Director: Shirley V. Lewis
Amount of Award: \$7,450 in outright funds

A three-day public symposium will be held for scholars to examine competing perspectives on the function of the missions in the Spanish colonial empire, the role of Father Junipero Serra, and the "missionization" of California Indians. The symposium will take place at D-Q University in February 1990.

Visionary San Francisco Film Project

Sponsor: Film Arts Foundation, San Francisco
Project Director: Hilary Grimm
Amount of Award: \$10,000 in outright funds

This one-hour documentary film describes the utopian dreams that helped shape and still define the city of San Francisco. Throughout this century various visionaries have proposed and illustrated ambitious plans for the city's development. Though these plans were not realized, they have influenced the way planners think about the city and have had an indirect impact on what the city has become. The film will be produced for television by Museum Films in collaboration with the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. It will be aired in KQED public television to coincide with the opening of the museum exhibition in 1990.

Humanities for Californians

Chinese Ceramics Symposium

Sponsor: Los Angeles County Museum of Art
Project Director: Earl A. Powell III
Amount of Award: \$7,500 in outright funds

A one-day international symposium will be held on September 16 to present the most recent scholarship on Chinese ceramics. Held in conjunction with two major exhibitions of Chinese ceramics at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the symposium will sponsor presentations by four scholars in the history of Chinese art and in ceramics technology.

Voices and Visions: The Art and Literature of Irish Women—a Radio Project

Sponsor: Western Public Radio, San Francisco
Project Director: Padraigin McGillicuddy
Amount of Award: \$5,000 in outright funds

In November of 1988 a six-day symposium on the art and literature of Irish women was held at San Francisco State University. The format was a series of lectures, slide shows, art and book exhibits, panel discussions and film screenings. Some of the material from this successful symposium will be developed into four radio scripts for broadcast on national public radio in March 1990.

Women Artists: Sex, Power, Politics. Crossing Cultures to Map the 90s

Sponsor: Intersection for the Arts, San Francisco
Project Director: Frances Phillips
Amount of Award: \$7,500 in outright funds

This three-day conference will engage scholars and artists in a public forum to discuss issues related to sex, power, and politics in works by women artists. Formats will include slide presentations, walking tours of local murals and galleries, public conversations between artists and scholars, workshops and performances. The conference is scheduled for February 1990.

Humanities and Contemporary Issues

Funny Ladies

Sponsor: Film Arts Foundation, San Francisco
Project Director: Pamela Beere Briggs
Amount of Award: \$6,816 in outright funds

This project will produce a script for a half-hour documentary that focuses on the work of six women cartoonists. Using a combination of interviews, cartoon strips, and scenes of the cartoonists at work, the film will allow the audience to learn about the world of cartooning and also about the issues facing women cartoonists of the 80s.

Jewish Film Festival Seminars

Sponsor: Jewish Film Festival, Berkeley
Project Director: Deborah Kaufman
Amount of Award: \$7,500 in matching funds if \$15,000 in outside gifts are raised

This project will organize and conduct two panel discussions and related film screenings on issues of concern to the Bay Area Jewish community: "Ethnic Stereotypes in Film" and "Idealism and Jewish Immigrants—Socialism, Yiddishkeit and Community." The panels will be scheduled as part of the 9th Annual Jewish Film Festival which takes place over a two-week period in July and August.

Missing Persons: The American Voters

Sponsor: Clarity Educational Productions, Inc., Berkeley
Project Director: Connie Field
Amount of Award: \$10,000 in outright funds

Is democracy in crisis? This one-hour video documentary will explore the phenomenon of declining political participation among Americans. It will show the history of citizen participation and examine a variety of solutions designed to expand participation. The primary focus of the film will be on California. Anticipated script completion date is the fall of 1989.

CCH Awards Seven Mini-Grants

"Official Images: New Deal Photography" is sponsored by the Mendocino County Museum, Willits. This grant in the amount of \$1,680 will support museum activities related to the Smithsonian SITES exhibition on New Deal photography that will be shown at the museum in the summer of 1990. Museum staff will arrange two public presentations and produce two publications.

"The Italian Experience in Northern California" is sponsored by Saint Mary's College, Moraga. This grant of \$1,500 will support a lecture, brochure and poster related to the exhibit which will be shown at three locations, two in San Francisco and one in Moraga. The exhibit opens in November and the lecture is scheduled for November 9.

"Marseillaise Over America" is sponsored by the Mendocino Public Libraries, Ukiah. This grant of \$850 will support the screening of Jean Renoir's classic film on the French Revolution on August 11 in Willits. A lecture preceding the film screening will be presented by Urmas Kaldveer, Instructor at Mendocino Community College.

"The Common Good: Individualism and Commitment in American Life" is the title of reading/discussion groups that will take place at four different library locations. Each library sponsor will receive \$1,500 to host the series.

- Merced County Library will host five Saturday morning sessions in January-March at the library.
- Orange County Public Library will host five Thursday evening sessions in January-March at Laguna Beach Public Library.
- Ontario City Library will host four Thursday evening sessions in January-March 1990.
- Downey City Library will host five bi-weekly discussion groups beginning January 20.

continued from page 1

Like some 19th century imperialists they can invade the life-world as though it were a primitive society and subject its moral life to the constraints of money and power.

The danger that I want to focus on tonight is particularly pernicious just because of what is going on behind the Iron Curtain. We may be blinded to what really threatens us by the phenomenon that Robert Heilbroner has recently called "The Triumph of Capitalism." In a February issue of *The New Yorker* Heilbroner wrote:

"Less than seventy-five years after it officially began, the contest between capitalism and socialism is over: capitalism has won. The Soviet Union, China and Eastern Europe have given us the clearest possible proof that capitalism organizes the material affairs of humankind more satisfactorily than socialism: that however inequitably or irresponsibly the marketplace may distribute goods, it does so better than the queues of a planned economy; however mindless the culture of commercialism, it is more attractive than state moralism; and however deceptive the ideology of a business civilization, it is more believable than that of a socialist one. Indeed, it is difficult to observe the changes taking place in the world today and not conclude that the nose of the capitalist camel has been pushed so far under the socialist tent that the great question now seems how rapid will be the transformation of socialism into capitalism, and not the other way around, as things looked only a half century ago."

One of the consequences of this remarkable change is a new opportunity for world community because of the lessening of the military competition between the United States and the Soviet Union. That is one of the most hopeful aspects of the world situation today.

But we are tempted to emphasize not just that the Cold War is over, or almost over, but that we won it. There will be a McDonald's in Moscow. What more tangible evidence of our victory? And the lesson we draw is not that society has resisted the state but that capitalism is the answer to all our problems. The free market works—all we need is individualism, a minimal state and entrepreneurial energy.

But Heilbroner in his second paragraph, a paragraph that begins ominously with the word "yet," indicates clearly that that is the wrong lesson to draw:

"Yet I doubt whether the historic drama will conclude, like a great morality play, in the unequivocal victory of one side and the ignominious defeat of the other. The economic enemy of capitalism has always been its own self-generated dynamics, not the presence of an alternative economic system. Socialism, in its embodiments in the Soviet Union and, to a lesser degree, China, has been a military and political competitor but never an economic threat. Thus, despite the rout of centralized planning—to judge by the stories coming from Moscow, it has the proportions of a rout—one would have to be very incautious to assume that capitalism will now find itself rid of its propensity to generate both inflation and recession, cured of its intermittent speculative fevers, or free of threatening international economic problems. Nevertheless, in one very important respect the triumph of capitalism alters the manner in which we



Robert Bellah speaks with a member of the audience after the Public Humanities Lecture.

must assess its prospects. The old question 'Can capitalism work?' to which endless doubting answers have been given by critics, becomes 'Can capitalism work well enough?' which is quite another thing."

So I will take the unpopular position that the triumph of capitalism should lead us not to triumphalism but to self-reflection. Indeed I will argue that the greatest threat to our genuine human happiness, to real community and to the creation of a good society comes not only from a state whose power becomes too coercive (we can never underestimate that danger), but from an economy that becomes too coercive, that invades our private and group lives and tempts us to a shallow competitive individualism that undermines all our connections to other people.

Let me say at once that we need a good government and a good economy. It is not a question of abolishing them, but of putting the proper limits on them. We know that we need to limit the state. I want to argue that we need to limit the economy as well when it becomes imperialistic and threatens to dominate our lives. Indeed I would argue that there is such a thing as market totalitarianism that parallels state totalitarianism and is a real threat to us in America today.

"The humanities are concerned with the traditions and resources that help us in community or society or life-world to think and talk about our common moral understandings, our search for the common good."

To make my point I will turn to the humanities. I do so because the humanities are concerned with the traditions and resources that help us in community or society or the life-world, to think and talk about our common moral understandings, our search for the common good. From one point of view the phrase "public humanities" is redundant. What would "private humanities" be? I don't want to talk about the state of the humanities in our universities today—that would be another lecture—nor do I want to attack specialization as such. It is just that I don't see any break, certainly any Iron Curtain, between what goes on in university humanities departments and the common conversation of citizens. Specialization is justified precisely because it always has the possibility of extending the common conversation.

I will turn to the humanities now because I want to juxtapose the views of a classic author to a popular contemporary author to make my point about the threat that the economy poses to the survival of community.

My two authors are Adam Smith and Milton Friedman. Milton Friedman, and particularly his more zealous and radical successors in the Chicago school of economics, have created the ideology of the totalitarian market and not Adam Smith.

Adam Smith taught moral philosophy for many years at Edinburgh University. He believed in the importance of what he called civil society, based on sympathy and enduring moral commitments—what I am calling community in this talk tonight. Civil society, according to Adam Smith, provides the essential context within which the market can operate. Indeed, Smith never speaks of "the market" in a single unified sense at all. There are only a variety of specific, particular markets, each hedged in by a set of moral relationships. Smith never imagined the possibility of a society that could run on self-interest alone. Nor could the founders of the American republic. Such a society would self-destruct, they thought. And today as the ideology of radical self-interest, the principle of the market, spreads, we see more than a few destructive symptoms.

In the hands of Milton Friedman's successors, economics becomes a total science that explains everything. As so-called "rational choice theory" it has invaded all the social sciences—especially sociology. Alan Wolfe in his new book, *Whose Keeper?*, describes the Chicago school today, suggesting how in its teachings economics is attempting to replace the humanities and become our new moral philosophy or even our new religion:

"When neither religion, tradition, nor literature is capable of serving as a common moral language, it may be that the one moral code all modern people can understand is self-interest. If social scientists are secular priests, Chicago school economists have become missionaries. They have an idea about how the world works. This idea seems to apply in some areas of life. It therefore in all . . . follows, they believe, that it ought to apply

Chicago school theorists insist that the tools of economic analysis can be used not just to decide whether production should be increased or wages decreased, but in every kind of decision-making situation. Thus we have been told . . . that marriage is not so much about love as about supply and demand as regulated through markets for spouses; . . . and a man commits suicide 'when the total discounted lifetime utility remaining to him reaches zero.' From the perspective of the Chicago school, there is no behavior that is *not* interpretable as economic, however altruistic, emotional, disinterested, and compassionate it may seem to others . . .

How far Chicago theorists are willing to take their arguments. . . can be illustrated by Elizabeth Landes and Richard Posner's argument for a free market in babies. At the present time, they suggest, revulsion against the buying and selling of babies, combined with ineffective legal efforts to regulate such activities, has caused a massive number of social problems . . . If women were allowed to sell their babies on the market [these problems would decrease] . . . Problems of racial discrimination would be taken care of by the market, for blacks would buy black babies and whites would buy white ones:

"Were baby prices quoted as prices of soy-bean futures were quoted, a racial ranking of these prices would be evident, with white baby prices higher than nonwhite baby prices."

continued on page 9

All But A Few Of Us Are Newcomers To Orange County

by Paul Estrada

I believe that each of us, whether we think of it in these exact terms or not, spends a great part of our life trying to answer the questions of who are we? Where did we come from? What are we doing here? Where are we going? We can do this by looking at our families, at our neighborhoods, or at our local community—Orange County.

My people, the Juañeno, are descendants of the original native inhabitants of Orange County. When I was very little, I would go around Orange County with my parents, and I would think, "My ancestors lived here and died here. They hunted and fished here. They walked in the hills and canyons and they harvested the fruits of this land." Wherever I am in Orange County, they were there too. Even beneath my feet where I am right now—they were there. Can you imagine what a dear and precious thing that is to feel? I carry this feeling with a quiet pride and with a great deal of caring and love for this place called Orange County. This is my native land. And to all those of you who live here now, I say, let it be yours too. And to all of you who have come from other places and live here now, I say, please walk softly on this land. Give it some dignity and respect, for it is now yours to share with me.

My father was born in 1897 just a few miles east of here in a place called Brea-Olinda. My mother was born in the Logan area of Santa Ana in 1908. My grandmother was born in the Santiago Canyon area in 1885, and my great grandmother was born in the same area in 1862. Many of our Juañeno families can recite similar family histories here in Orange County, but none can go back further than 1776 because that is when the San Juan Capistrano Mission was founded and there are no records for Juañeno people before that date. I should add that in the Capistrano mission records there are indicated approximately eighty or more village names in the Orange County area. Of these the exact locations of only about ten or twelve are known.

When I was ten years old, my father died. And at that time, of course, I thought my father was the best and finest man there ever was. And some years later when I was eighteen and I began to mingle in the adult community, I introduced myself to strangers and they would ask me if John Estrada was my father. When I said yes, they would say, "Well, let me shake your hand. He was a fine man and a good friend of mine." And then they would tell me wonderful stories about him. Since that time, I have hoped that when I am gone, some people might meet my children and say to them that I was a good man and a good friend. To me that is a finer inheritance than any material possession.

I remember as a child that we made visits to the neighbors, and they made visits to our house. We had family celebrations and gatherings and there were many happy greetings. When people died, there were wakes and funerals and burials. My brother and sister were on the town baseball teams, and my sister and I were in the church choir.

All of these experiences are so simple and yet so wonderful. We don't see them as much today. Even in my own family. Everyone is so spread apart, too far away and too busy. Instead of playing the sport, we watch it on TV. Kids don't create and invent games or act them out physically. They read the instructions, punch some buttons and stare at the screen or do it by



Fred Estrada of the Juañeno Mission Indian Tribe makes a point in his presentation "All But a Few of Us Are Newcomers to Orange County."

remote control. I don't think kids are really any more hyperactive than we were; they just don't get a chance to work it off anymore.

Very few people in Orange County today can have the kind of family, neighborhood and community life I have been talking about. And I think it is even worse than that. There are trends that have been building for some time that are pulling us apart.

The struggle to survive in the Orange County economy is getting to be too much of a burden for too many people. Over 90% of the people in Orange County cannot afford to buy a home here. House prices are getting higher, houses are getting smaller and closer together. Some people spend up to three or four hours each day in their cars just getting to and from work. Many people do not really "live" in their homes; they just sleep there and many do not even eat there.

"It seems obvious that before an individual can be active and participate and have a concerned awareness of community, he or she must be decently fed, clothed and housed."

Our local governments seem on the whole to be controlled by large landholders, developers and big business people who don't really care about what the needs of the citizens are or their standard of living or their quality of life. I think the development of toll roads in Orange County amounts to the construction of private driveways for the very wealthy. People can't afford the homes that will be built along those roads, but pretty soon they will be asked to approve an increase in taxes in order to begin construction of those toll roads.

I was taught that our elected officials are the servants of the people, not the other way around. Sometimes

"I believe that this humanities conference is a beginning and must be perpetuated if Orange County is to become a family of families or a community of communities."

I think we are deceiving our young people in our schools by teaching that we have a system of government by or for the people. A lot of it looks like just plain government to the people.

I have concerns about young people in college who want to be doctors or lawyers or businessmen not to ease human suffering or to aid people in securing justice or to provide good services or quality products, but only to make as much money as possible as quickly as possible.

In the home construction business, homes used to be built when there was a definite need and the homes were built for the ones who needed them. Today homes are built and an artificial "need" is created. People who already have homes are enticed into moving "up" and the truly needy are given the leftovers and those at inflated prices.



Panelist Fred Estrada speaks with CCH member Loni Ding at the Public Humanities Conference.

In sharing my thoughts with you this morning I have tried to give you some small understanding of how a native Juañeno feels about Orange County, and I am sure you see that much is the same as you might have for your own native land or place. Basically it seems obvious that before an individual can be active and participate and have a concerned awareness of community, he or she must be decently fed, clothed and housed. Beyond that I believe that in order for Orange County to become a more defined community, its people need to communicate, to have a better understanding of each other, and to interact by gathering together. I believe that this humanities conference is a beginning and must be perpetuated if Orange County is to become a family of families or a community of communities.

Fred Estrada has been on the Tribal Council of the Juañeno band of Native Americans, who trace their ancestry and heritage to the Mission at San Juan Capistrano, for over ten years. He is currently the secretary and spokesperson for the band.

Community in Orange County?

Whose Story and How Local?

by Spencer Olin

I am a third-generation Californian who came to Orange County in 1965 as a founding faculty member of UCI. My field of expertise is modern American and California history. A few years ago I published some articles and taught some courses in an area in which I have somewhat less expertise but deep interest: namely, the history of American communitarianism and utopian social experiments. For the past several years, I have been engaged in research dealing with the development of Orange County since World War II.

Everyone here is fully aware that the past fifty years have been ones of phenomenal growth for this particular region, years in which former "communities" located in relatively small towns have been irreversibly displaced. Indeed, many here today might well argue that social change in Orange County during the past fifty years has meant, among other things, the *destruction of community*. Whether these displaced former communities have been replaced by new communities or by non-communities (or even anti-communities) is an important question on the agenda of this conference.

We all bring to this conference our own definitions of community, our own sense of what that term means to us. It is appropriate, therefore, that I provide my own definition before arguing for the *need to reconceptualize that term* in an Orange County context. As Thomas Bender has pointed out in his thoughtful study entitled *Community and Social Change in America*, "the most common sociological definitions used today tend to focus on a community as an aggregate of people who share a common interest in a particular locality. Territorially based social organizations and social activity thus define a community. . ."

"The concept of community entails much more than a place or a locality. It entails as well the expectation of a special quality of human relationships."

Notice the stress placed there on the relation of community to a particular *locality* or a particular *place*. A community is assumed to be a localized example of the larger society. Our social memory of community always seems to have a geographic referent, and that geographic referent is often the town in which we grew up. What I would like to stress in my own definition of community is not so much locality or place, but *experience*. Here I agree with Thomas Bender that the concept of community entails much more than a place or locality. It entails as well, and in my opinion even more importantly, the *expectation of a special quality of human relationships*. It means *shared understandings* and a *sense of mutual obligation and caring*. Perhaps it is best defined, therefore, as Bender stated: "a network of social relations marked by mutuality (or reciprocity) and emotional (and intellectual) bonds..." I suggest, therefore, that a preoccupation with locality as an essential ingredient of, or precondition for, community may very well confuse our understanding



Spencer Olin describes Orange County as a "post-urban" community in his presentation, "Whose Story and How Local?"

of that term. As Martin Buber declared forty years ago in *Paths in Utopia*: "A real community need not consist of people who are perpetually together; but it must consist of people who, precisely because they are comrades, have mutual access to one another and are ready for one another."

It may be that I am somewhat fixated on the concept of community as experience rather than as locality because of two factors: (1) my strong belief in the desirability of community and my intense wish to resuscitate and retain it, and (2) because of what I have experienced and learned about Orange County. There are at least three material realities about this region that seem to me to require us to reconceptualize our notion of community if we intend to re-establish it as an important component of our everyday lives. These are: (1) Orange County's unusually deconcentrated spatial organization; (2) the reliance of its economy on information technologies; and (3) the integration of that economy into the international marketplace, or in other words, the globalization of its economy.

First, the spatial organization of Orange County. Our county is often referred to as a suburban region. Suburban regions customarily have been defined as what remains when traditional central cities are removed from a larger metropolitan area. They function as peripheral bedroom communities from which commuters travel to workplaces in an urban core. As such, they are in large measure economically, politically, and culturally inert and "sleepy" places. Orange County certainly does *not* fit this customary suburban pattern. It is neither primarily urban, nor rural, nor suburban.

I suggest that Orange County represents a historic new form of settlement space which I will label "post-suburban." I mean by post-suburban that it is both multicentered and decentralized in terms of its housing, its industry, its commercial life, its recreation, its cultural activities, and so forth. Not only does Orange County lack a single urban core, but its operating logic is the exact *opposite* of the conventional suburb. Moreover, within its new decentralized environment exists all the economic vitality, technological inventiveness, and cultural diversity formerly associated with the traditional central city. If we wish to recapture community in such a remarkably sprawling, deconcentrated

"I suggest that Orange County represents a historic new form of settlement space which I will label 'post-suburban.'"

region, it is incumbent upon us to reconceptualize that term away from narrow locality and toward broader experience.

Secondly, Orange County's information-based economy. While the sheer growth of this region in the past half-century has been significant and striking, so also has been the *kind* of economy that has developed here. More so than the national economy of which it is a part, Orange County's sub-regional economy has evolved from, first, an agricultural one to, next, a manufacturing one, and, more recently, to one that is predominantly information-oriented. By this I mean that its labor force is composed primarily of those occupations in which the processing and distribution of information is a central and time-consuming activity. I do *not* refer here to a *high-tech* workforce within manufacturing alone but to an *information* workforce in services such as finance, insurance, real estate, education, and travel, as well as manufacturing. Nearly sixty percent of Orange County's workforce is in the so-called information sector. It is not stretching the case to describe Orange County's economy as a new stage of "informational capitalism."

Again, in such a region the very concept of community must be redefined, for it is entirely possible that the public forum will be replaced by the computer forum. Face-to-face interaction in a particular *place* will give way to mind-to-mind interaction *across* space. On this matter, read the article by David Glidden in last Sunday's Los Angeles Times ("Intimacy of the Word Revived by Computer"). There he mentions the possibility not merely of one-to-one communication via electronic mail, but 1-to-150 or even 150-to-150. Glidden writes: "Something that was lost in the age of telephone seems to be returning via the computer: literary friendship. Friendships formed through conversation are rather different from those written out."

"Those of us in Orange County who wish to affirm the importance of place and of regionality — and of the experience of community — must not do so in nostalgic terms."

Verbal friendships are more transitory, thriving on the clever phrase, feeding off the facts of daily life — jobs, habits, dinner parties, shopping trips or sex stories. Friendships that come about through writing are far more intimate than this." There is much here worth pondering in terms of our quest for community in an age of informational capitalism and in a region whose spatial organization is characterized by its impressive deconcentration.

The point is that we must struggle to appropriate for our *own* ends the very technologies now largely monopolized by the wealthy and the powerful. If General Electric can create an international telecommunications network that can permit its employees to communicate worldwide, then why can't we use the very same or similar technologies to promote

continued on page 9

What Do We Hold In Common? Moving Toward a Larger Sense of Community

A Panel Discussion



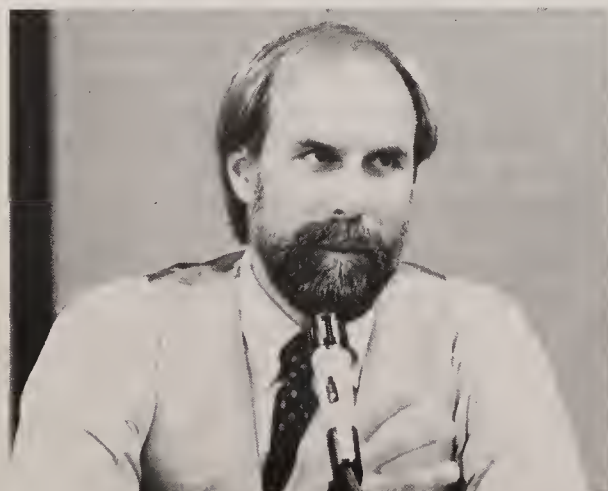
Susan Gordon, CCH program officer, welcomes the participants at the Public Humanities Conference in Fullerton.



Paul Apodaca, Curator of Folk Art, Bowers Museum in Santa Ana.



Constance Carroll, President of Saddleback College in Mission Viejo.



James Quay, Executive Director of CCH.

Constance Carroll is President of Saddleback Community College in Mission Viejo. She served as Chair of the California Council for the Humanities from 1986-88.

Paul Apodaca is Curator of Folk Art for the Bowers Museum in Santa Ana and book review editor for News From Native California.

James Quay is executive director of the California Council for the Humanities.

Constance Carroll: The key in today's discussion is to define what we mean by community. We talk a lot about differences and commonalities, but community in the twentieth century, and particularly in this area of the country, is something that we have to create for ourselves.

I grew up in Baltimore, Maryland during the period of segregation when there were two separate school systems: the Baltimore School System and the Department of Negro Education. With desegregation, the two school systems were merged. That was quite an emotional period of time for me as a child of parents who were both educators because what actually happened was that the Negro Department of Education was completely subsumed by the other system and practically everyone who had been with the Negro schools lost his or her job. Assimilation in that particular situation was very clear with regard to what the outcome was in terms of community.

The other thing about growing up in Baltimore was that the meaning of certain words we have been discussing today was very clear: family was the immediate family connected by blood relationships; neighborhood was a place usually bound by city blocks, and in Baltimore the neighborhoods were intensely ethnic. Community was based on common interests and moral values. There was a black community and a Jewish community. There was never any confusion regarding these terms.

The notion of community as we define it is a very complex organization and cannot be simplified. The educational institution I preside over is a conglomerate of communities: departments that are highly egalitarian or intensely hierarchical in their interactions; students who form themselves into groups based on sex, class, economic conditions, ability to speak English, intellectual interests and so on. But our work within the college boundary is to find the common good, the common philosophies and values that hold everyone together. And I think that has been done, at least in my college, despite the intrusion of economic factors or considerations related to productivity or cost effectiveness.

My college is in South Orange County, Mission Viejo, which is characterized by a very high socioeconomic level, is ninety-seven percent Republican, patriotic and religiously fundamentalist, and still has a culture based on its agricultural past. Right now it is challenged by the enormous wave of immigration into the area and by class mobility. New racial mixtures are moving into the area and many people are changing their economic status. The mix of neighborhoods begins to reflect these changes.

What does this mean for South Orange County in terms of community? What needs to be done? First of all, I think it is very important for South Orange County to define what it wants its community to become. There is a great deal of talk about what the differences among the groups are and how these are barriers to a common sense of community. But I think it is important to have a discussion about what values we have in common — what do we mean by family, by free speech, and what do we want the community to be. If we want an inclusive community that will nurture those differences, then there are some practical considerations we need to address. And to do this there needs to be a commitment to political activism to ensure affordable housing and decent systems of transportation. It also means diversifying the faculty of all segments of higher education by having at least thirty percent representation of ethnic minorities.

Another practical step is to determine new rituals and events that will promote understanding of the various ethnic groups. There could be separate or joint ethnic celebrations that would strengthen the new community even as we are defining it.

Orange County is an area that is experiencing tremendous changes. We need to talk about community and be clear about what we want our community to be. But we also need to take some very practical steps toward creating a kind of community that could be very special in the history of this country.

We also need to face some realities about the current situation in this country and in Orange County. Poverty has increased and particularly poverty for women and children has increased. Racism has increased; anti-Semitism has increased. In order to have a community in which all can participate and be locked in debate, we need to have time to have a debate, a home to have the debate in and food that will provide the energy for a debate. This means an agenda of political activism is needed that will bring about the changes needed to support the type of community we want.

Paul Apodaca: I know almost everyone in this room. That is community to me. I know most of the people where I live; I know most of the people where I work; I know most of the people that I deal with. I have created, in my mind at least, the idea of a homeland. And that is an idea that I share with you.

I have a homeland that I live within, and that homeland starts within my own house. We are friends inside that house. There is no room in the house that no one can go in; there is no drawer in the house that no one can open. Outside of my home, I know the people that own the grocery store across the street. I know the lady who has the dry cleaning store next door, the lady across the street who has a restaurant, and the guys at the local video store.

This idea of community is having my homeland that I live within and spending my money in those stores that are around my house so those store owners know that I am helping them to do business and to serve the community.

continued on page 8

Discussion

continued from p.7

I work with the school districts. I know almost every school teacher and principal in Orange County. We have all worked together at one time or another. We are trying to make it a better place for each other. This is not a hard concept for me to live within, and it does not seem like it should be hard to communicate it to others.

I can expand my homeland from my street to the entire town of Orange and pretty soon I know the people at the bank and I know the mayor. I can then extend the size of that homeland to include maybe Santa Ana and parts of Tustin. And when I find friends in Long Beach or Los Angeles I can increase my homeland to include those places.

Two years ago I was given a Smithsonian fellowship and I went to Washington, D.C. Can I actually stretch so far as to bring Washington, D.C. within the perimeters of my homeland? It is not that hard a thing to do. But what it takes is my being willing not to be afraid. It takes my willingness to extend the hand of friendship and to allow people to either respond or not respond. It takes my commitment to feeling that I am their brother and to knowing that that is my proper relationship. And nine times out of ten people recognize that relationship almost immediately and we work together to accomplish things.

One of the things that I feel is a threat to community is a cynical approach to it, dwelling on the negative aspects associated with community. And I must say that for some reason this cynicism seems to be a resident quality in intellectualism. I have heard touches of it throughout the discussion today. I am not saying that there are not realities. Certainly there are. But I am saying that Orange County has not changed. I have lived here since 1954, and the corporate power structure is not any more entrenched now than it was in 1956. People are no more conservative now than they were in 1958 when the John Birch Society was in great strength here. Racism is not any stronger than it was when I could not sit in the ground floor of the Broadway Theatre in Santa Ana as a little boy. The availability of food and redistribution of wealth is no more disparate now than when they would not allow my father to buy groceries at the Tustin Market in 1954.

Orange County really is no different now than it was then. What we have right now, I think, is the ability to step out of fear, to step away from cynicism. I think we have the opportunity and the ability right now to be able to look upon each other as fellow citizens, to care for each other and to be unashamed of that caring and to use that as a way to try to make a better life for all of us.

We need to remember that when we are talking about the common good for all people in Orange County, we are talking about how people can come together and how they can help each other. We are not talking about ethnicity. Community does not translate into ethnicity. I tried to point that out to a gentleman from a local newspaper who called last week to ask about the conference. He said, "How can you have a community coming together for the common good when Mexicans create the fiesta marketplace, Koreans create a Korean district in Garden Grove, and the South Vietnamese create Little Saigon?" No matter what I said to him I could not convince him that the conference was not about ethnicity.

I want to stress this because my concept of homeland includes everyone as individuals, as family. To me the idea of homeland is the underlying principle behind my sense of community. And I am constantly trying to take



Panelists Paul Apodaca and Constance Carroll share a light moment at the Public Humanities Conference.

advantage of opportunities that the Great Mystery brings to me that allows me to increase that homeland. Hopefully someday I will be able to feel that anywhere I go I am at home and I have friends. This is a methodology that may be impractical, may be too idealistic. Yet it rings true to me within my Native American sensibilities, and it rings true to me within my American sensibilities. It rings true to me within my responsibilities as a curator, as one who is here to serve the community.

And so I offer to you the hand of friendship and I ask you to be my friend. And I ask you to live within my homeland and to invite me within yours. And I think that might be a start at community.

James Quay: In November of 1987 a philosopher named Alasdair MacIntyre gave a speech that I have referred to often called "How to Be a North American." He spoke of the need to share in a common conversation and to feel as though we are all participating in a common enterprise.

"Yet, those of us in America who come together do so from a variety of cultures, with a heterogeneous variety of pasts and a variety of stories to tell. If we do not recover and identify with the particularities of our own community, then we shall lose what it is that we have to contribute to the common culture. We shall have nothing to bring, nothing to give."

This lecture has particular relevance for Californians because if America has been called a nation of immigrants, surely this is a state of immigrants. One Californian in six was born outside of the United States. More than one-quarter of all immigrants and one-third of all refugees coming into the U.S. settle in California. By the year 2000 minority groups will constitute the majority of the state's citizens.

Since its inception, the California Council for the Humanities has encouraged the state's many ethnic groups to examine their respective heritages and to tell their story. As a result, nineteen of the eighty-three projects we funded in the last two years focused on ethnic culture and history.

Finding diversity in California and in the CCH programs is not a challenge. Finding the common ground is. California has a need for the one as well as for the many. And this need is reflected in the second part of MacIntyre's statement.

"But if each of us dwells too much, or even exclusively, upon his or her own ethnic particularity, then we are in danger of fragmenting and even destroying the common life. This is why it is a good deal more difficult to be an American than to belong to most other peoples. One has to have

two identities: one, that of an American, sharing the common life and contributing to it, and the other that of one's own particular ethnic background."

CCH was one of the last state humanities councils to be established, and at the time of its founding NEH required that every council have a theme. The California Council's theme emerged during a series of public meetings held throughout the state in 1974. One of the founding members, the late historian Lynn White wrote after the last of these meetings:

"Although in many meetings with groups all over California a great variety of deep concerns emerged, many of them seemed to issue from similar feelings about impersonality, loneliness, a sense of not belonging, and alienation. Beneath the broad spectrum of specific questions about pollution, ecology, crime and so on, there emerged the common denominator of concern about the fundamental question: How do we find community in the final sense — the sense including generations of the unborn as well as the multiplicity of ethnic and social groups."

In January of 1975 the Council voted to center its grants program on the theme "The Pursuit of Community in California." Despite the fact that state councils are no longer required to have themes, despite the elimination of our original emphasis on public policy, despite the revamping of grant categories, a complete turnover of staff, and several rotations of the board, this original theme continues to pervade the Council's program. Last year when we were in Fresno, the theme of the public conference was "Cultures in Transition: Immigration in the Central Valley." This year the theme is "Community in Orange County?"

What do we hold in common? There are a few things I would suggest that *hold us* in common whether we like it or not: the economy we are a part of, the environment we are a part of, and the political institutions that govern us. As for what we hold in common, we do not know. So we talk to one another. Most often we talk to one another when we want something or when something is being threatened. I think we need to talk in less pressured but equally compelling forums such as the one that has been created here today.

Robert Bellah has shown how market values have invaded every aspect of our lives, and this happens because the authority of demand has filled a vacuum created by the retreat of other traditional kinds of authority. If the market would not totally dominate, what authority would oppose it? Bob Bellah suggested that as parents, as teachers, and as citizens we must exercise a certain authority. But he did not say what could be the basis of that authority. I would suggest that engaging in a kind of dialogue that includes giving reasons why or why not a particular action is supported or prohibited is a good place to begin. For example, if I tell my children that they cannot watch a program on television, I would offer reasons why I feel it is damaging to them. The important point in this approach is the discussion itself — not that any agreement will necessarily be reached.

The authority that we cannot impose we can only create; and we can only create it by speaking together, by locking together in "civil argument" as Bellah put it. Discussions of this kind, which would by their nature draw on the humanities — history, ethics, literature — provide an alternative to the monoculture that threatens all of us. The humanities offer content and also offer a methodology for thoughtful discourse and meaningful exchange about what concerns us most. And for this process we need the contribution of every culture in this room.

continued from page 4

These bizarre ideas are not, unfortunately, just theoretical. They influence many aspects of our lives. They have a powerful influence, for example, on government. Ann Swidler, one of my co-authors in *Habits of the Heart*, when doing interviews for our new book, *The Good Society*, talked to an expert at the Environmental Protection Agency about how they figured the trade-offs in the costs of human lives saved versus the costs of the safety devices that would save them. Ann suggested: "Some people believe human life is priceless." The government expert replied, "We have no data on that."

"In a period when the pressures of economic competition are increasing to an unprecedented degree, we need, in each institutional sphere, to think about those things that are literally priceless, which cannot be calculated in terms of any bottom line."

I could give you more examples of market imperialism, but I am sure you can come up with examples from your own lives. If I am right about the danger, then we need to use all the resources we have to confine the economy to its own proper sphere and keep it from devouring the whole of our lives. I want to conclude by suggesting that many Americans are beginning to see the danger. There are signs that the tide may be turning.

As a cultural indicator let me quote a few paragraphs from George Bush's inaugural address, the like of which we have not heard for quite a while.

"America today is a proud, free nation, decent and civil—a place we cannot help but love . . .

But have we changed as a nation, even in our time? Are we enthralled with material things, less appreciative of the nobility of work and sacrifice?

My friends, we are not the sum of our possessions. They are not the measure of our lives. In our hearts, we know what matters. We cannot hope only to leave our children a bigger car, a bigger bank account. We must hope to give them a sense of what it means to be a loyal friend, a loving parent, a citizen who leaves his home, his neighborhood and town better than he found it.

And what do we want the men and women who work with us to say when we're no longer there? That we were more driven to succeed than anyone around us? Or that we stopped to ask if a sick child had gotten better and stayed a moment there to trade a word of friendship?

My friends, we have work to do. There are the homeless, lost and roaming—there are the children who have nothing, no love, no normalcy—there are those who cannot free themselves of enslavement to whatever addiction—drugs, welfare, demoralization that rules the slums. There is crime to be conquered, the rough crime of the streets. There are young women to be helped who are about to become mothers of children they can't care for and might not love."



Trees and groves in Orange County. Courtesy of the Orange County Historical Society.

It remains to be seen whether those words were sincere or hypocritical, whether the thousand points of light will be left to blow out one by one in the cold wind of economic competition, or whether they will be nourished with real policies and effective leadership. There are other encouraging signs: voluntarism and charitable giving are up; social work schools, after a long dearth of applications, are suddenly being flooded by applicants; there is even a *New York Times* story that successful young professionals who have found the fast track meaningless have decided to become high school teachers in order to find work that is more intrinsically meaningful.

It is easy to see these reactions against the domination of our lives by the market economy as purely individual decisions based on personal reasons. We know, however, that without institutional support, without role models and exemplary stories, few people are able to withstand the pressures of consumerism and competition all alone. It is here that the humanities in the broadest sense are important, and the humanities not just in books but as embodied in living institutions.

"I would argue that there is such a thing as market totalitarianism that parallels state totalitarianism and is a real threat to us in America today."

In a period when the pressures of economic competition are increasing to an unprecedented degree, we need, in each institutional sphere, to think about those things that are literally priceless, which cannot be calculated in terms of any bottom line. Those of us in higher education are subject to these pressures as much as anyone. There is, then, no more gratifying moment for a teacher than the moment when a student realizes, perhaps for the first time, that his or her education is not just a means to career and success, but is about those things that are good in themselves, about who we are as persons, as a society, as a world. It is in those moments that students understand that they will fulfill themselves only with other people, not against them. Albert Borgmann has said that education can enable or disable for life. That is true for all the institutions which nurture our capacity to seek the good in common with other people. If we are to prevent the economy and the administrative state from, as Milosz put it, eating up society, then we must strengthen all those life-enabling institutions upon which our life as a community depends.

How Local? continued from p.6

democratic communities which (in the words of Robert Bellah via Jurgen Habermas) involve "common moral understandings dependent on the use of language"?

Finally, the globalization of Orange County's economy. It is commonplace to observe that for the past several decades the American economy has been simultaneously undergoing "internal" restructuring and "external" globalization. That is to say, the economy has been transformed domestically away from its manufacturing base and toward the service and information sectors while being increasingly integrated into an international market system. What is much less understood is the impact of such profound changes upon the various localities within the United States, including Orange County, and upon the nature of human interaction in those regions. This fascinating tension between the increasingly global nature of modern economic life and the more restricted territorial concerns of political decisionmakers and citizens was unwittingly expressed by the group president of Fluor Daniel, one of Orange County's major multinational corporations: "We want to get people's attention that we are an international company working around the world that just happens to be headquartered in Irvine." To what extent does this new and undeniable reality of "footloose" capital annihilate the old reality of place and of what might be called "located" tradition?

Orange County's deconcentrated spatial organization. Orange County's information-based economy. The globalization of Orange County's economy and the recent arrival of powerful economic actors whose multinational activities have very non-traditional political consequences for locality. What concept of community is most appropriate for such a region? How is it possible to *experience* community in such a region? I wish I had firm, reasoned, informed answers to these difficult questions. But of this I feel fairly certain: Those of us in Orange County who wish to affirm the importance of place and of regionality — and of the experience of community — must not do so in nostalgic terms. Professor Bellah himself has warned against "yearning for the small town" that is "irretrievably lost" — even as he seeks to reappropriate the traditions the small town once embodied. No, this is not the time to apotheosize the vanished small town of an older America. Rather, it is time to proclaim our legitimate need for community and for self-directed social activity, and then creatively explore innovative ways to satisfy that need in a post-suburban, informational, global age.

Spencer Olin has been a member of the History Department at UC Irvine since the campus opened in 1965. He is co-editor of a volume of essays Post-Suburban California: The Social Transformation of Orange County Since World War II to be published by UC Press.

From Old Timer to New Timer: The Life and Work of Mark M. Walker

by Jo Farb Hernandez

Director, Monterey Peninsula Museum of Art

Editor's Note: Mark Malcolm Walker was born on February 29, 1892 near DeHaven, a now-vanished redwood mill town on the rugged Mendocino Coast. In 1980 Mark approached the Mendocino County Museum with the idea that they could make use some of his creations and memorabilia to convey local history. The museum has presented two exhibits of Walker's artifacts, has documented his personal history and career through oral history tapes, and has produced a videotape record of Walker's perspectives of North Coast life. This year CCH awarded a grant to the Monterey Peninsula Museum of Art to mount an exhibit focusing on the work of Mark Walker including a video documentation of his life and career. The following article about the exhibit and about the man described as a "living cultural treasure" was included in the booklet which accompanies the exhibit.

The isolated setting of California's rugged North Coast demanded much from the early settlers who crossed the Great Plains. The complete lack of ready-to-buy amenities required creative solutions for the daily problems of providing the fundamentals of food, shelter, and the beginnings of a new life. Diverse skills were needed to survive, and the products created with those skills reflected the rural environment with an admirable combination of imagination and functionality.

The influence of these early homesteaders on Mark Walker has been strong throughout his 97 years. Like the settlers who established homesteads in the North Coast and made by hand what they needed to tame the California wilderness, Mark Walker makes things. The kinds of things he makes has varied greatly over time. An early emphasis on functional objects—from benches and rakes to houses and barns—was later expanded to include objects such as fiddles which complement one's working life with elements of fun and communal activity. And after his retirement in 1959 at age 67, he began creating "things that I always kinda liked to do but never had the time to do"—like mural paintings and sculpture.

His lifelong creative endeavors evolved from a series of inspirations that were worked out as the pieces themselves were created. The relationship of the objects to each other does not appear to be haphazard, for it stems from the process of their creation and the recurring concerns they manifest in aesthetic, style and technique.



Harvesting Tanbark, 1980. Photo: Sandra Metzler

Walker learned his own ways and methods of working by watching the early settlers work and developed a creative, problem-solving attitude that relied on an imaginative use of the limited resources on hand. This attitude had less to do with book learning or formal academic techniques than with a common sense approach to assessing a need and responding to it.

"Nobody had to show me how. It was just there and I could see. . . what you'd have to do to make something out of it. The way I learned what I know—I don't claim that I know it all yet, or any great part of it—but what I do know I can blame it on my folks on both sides of my family."

The objects that Walker has made reflect the life experiences of the individuals who make up the North Coast community. Although the range of his creations has been diverse, all may be viewed as interpretations of the interconnecting processes of creativity and practical problem solving that stem from the individual and community experience of life on the North Coast. His products have varied in emphasis as his needs and those of his neighbors have changed over the years; yet all are concerned in some way with these social, cultural, and historical elements. Houses, barns, and roads that he built helped form the basis for the local social landscape that we still see today. Other early work such as his flour bins, stools, rakes, and mallets shaped the life of his family and neighbors and made their work more efficient.

"I was raised on a homestead, far out in the country, and in those days, we didn't have much money to buy anything with so when we wanted anything, we just went out and made something as near as we could to what we wanted. . . I grew up doing that, from the time I was young, making little things that I needed."

These "little things" became more and more elaborate until by his early teens, he was being asked by neighbors and friends to help them with major construction projects. In 1916, at the age of 24, Walker built a large barn near the town of Willits for cowboy Ira Ordway. Although Walker occasionally had help, he built the barn essentially by himself, using only a hammer, saw, and square.

"You don't need many tools when you're a carpenter. . . Some of 'em, they have to have this and that, every little gadget, you know. It's just like some cooks. . . they got to have a mixer, a blender, a microwave oven and all that stuff. Now I can go home and take that old iron frying pan, put a big hot cake on there and fry it and flop it up in the air and catch it and be done while they're [still] getting ready."

Walker's emphasis on recreating earlier products or demonstrating how those products were created reveals the importance he places on transmitting this information to the younger generation. By using traditionally-learned skills in a traditional manner, he makes objects that both serve the actual need for which they were first created and teach today's children what life was like in earlier times. While transmitting information about barn building, constructing furniture, or crossing the plains, Walker also imparts a strong sense of the values that drove the early settlers: hard work, respect for one's heritage, and pride in a job well done.



Mark Walker playing his fiddle, 1981. Photo: Mark Rawitsch

Work is not Walker's only value, however. He understands that people need music, art, and diversion to make life—especially the hard life of the rural settlers—possible to endure. Because of this, he has added ornamentation to functional buildings and objects and has made fiddles used at local square dances.

"My folks have been fiddlemakers after a fashion since I was a kid. Both sides of my family. If they wanted a fiddle, why they made it. I guess some of 'em did pretty good too because I've been to dances where they played those fiddles and they kept everybody happy all night long."

As the need for some of Walker's skill has decreased with the increasing modernization of North Coast life, he has made a natural progression to concentrating on the educational aspect of his work—teaching children what life was like in the old days. To illustrate this, Walker has turned in his later years to the production of more personalized works such as the large-scale mural paintings on the sides of his workshop or the ox and cart that stands at the edge of his property on U.S. Highway 101. He began this piece in 1972 at the age of 80 and is still refining it today.

The objects that he makes function on two levels. For Walker personally, they provide a means for creative expression that complements his working life. For the community, they function as a reminder of the shared cultural heritage and values that have been and continue to be important signposts for local development. His traditional working methods, his reliance on local materials and resources, and his fascination with the way of life of the early settlers make Walker an essential resource for the transmission of this information—the bridge between two ways of life. "Passing it on" to the younger generation is the basis for making what he makes.

Mark Walker is one of those rare individuals who have integrated their creative expressions into their daily lives and the life of their community. A man with diverse skills and diverse works, he may perhaps be viewed as the epitome of the early North Coast settler. But it is also true that those values that his products epitomize—hard work, respect for his heritage, pride in a job well done, and the need for occasional fun and entertainment—retain their importance for rural residents of the contemporary North Coast as well. Because of this, Walker's creations truly serve their intended need, while underscoring the positive fusion of creativity, functionality, and resourcefulness found in this independent way of life.

"That's what you have to do, when you live out where you haven't got everything to do with. You got to find a way."

CALENDAR OF HUMANITIES EVENTS

EXHIBITS

- through
Aug. 27
- “Maritime Arts and Artisans” is an art exhibit by sailors from the collection of the National Maritime Museum, San Francisco, at the Craft and Folk Art Museum, Building A, Fort Mason Center, San Francisco. 415/775-0990
- through
Sept. 24
- “Solano Women,” an exhibit of photographs and artifacts illustrating the role of women in Solano County history, continues at the Vacaville Museum, 213 Buck Avenue. 707/447-4513
- through
Dec. 10
- “A Step Into the Past: Island Dwellers of Southern California,” continues at the Museum of Anthropology, CSU, Fullerton. 714/773-3977
- through
Feb. 25, 1990
- “Visions Toward Tomorrow: The History of the East Bay Afro-American Community, 1852-Present” is an exhibit opening on July 21st at the California Afro-American Museum, 600 State Dr., Exposition Park, Los Angeles. 213/744-7432

EVENTS

- Sept. 16-17
- “Chinese Ceramics Symposium” is scheduled at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 5905 Wilshire Blvd., Sat., 9:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.; Sun., 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; in conjunction with exhibits of Chinese ceramics opening Sept. 14th and continuing until Sept. 20th. 213/857-6222
- Oct. 7
- The film “Ethnic Notions” will be shown at the Richmond Museum, 400 Nevin, at 2 p.m. Marlon T. Riggs, Producer, will be the keynote speaker and discussant after the screening of the film.
- Oct. 10
- “Pilipino Americans: From Colony, Immigrants, to Citizens,” at Pasadena City College Forum, 7:30 p.m.-9 p.m. Keynote speaker is Roy Morales, Pacific Asian Alcoholism Project. 818/578-7221
- Oct. 14
- “Money and Politics: Ethical Issues Surrounding Campaign Financing Reform,” at the Mayer Theatre, Santa Clara University, 1 p.m.-4:15 p.m. Keynote speakers are Herbert Alexander, Political Science, USC, and Bruce Cain, Political Science, CA Institute of Technology. Respondents are Timothy Lukes and Paul McCloskey, Political Science, Santa Clara University. 408/554-5319
- Oct. 21
- “Chicano Poetry in California Language & Identity in a 20th Century Literature” is a conference at the Southwest Museum, 234 Museum Dr., Los Angeles, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Poetry readings are scheduled at East Los Angeles College, Bldg. K5, Rm. 108, 1301 Brooklyn Ave., Monterey Park, 8 p.m. 213/221-2164
- Oct. 22
- “Chicano Poetry in California Language & Identity in a 20th Century Literature” has scheduled poetry readings at the Santa Monica Public Library, Main Library Auditorium, Sixth and Santa Monica Blvd., 3 p.m. 213/221-2164.

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP NOMINATIONS INVITED

The California Council for the Humanities, an organization of public-spirited citizens interested in the humanities, will be selecting new members for its Council in 1990 and invites nominations from the public.

Members serve four-year terms. The public is invited to submit names of scholars and public citizens who have made significant contributions to the humanities. In inviting new members, the Council seeks representation from California’s diverse geographical, ethnic, and professional constituencies.

You are encouraged to submit a nomination on the form below. If you do so, you must also include a resume and a brief statement, indicating the nominee’s occupation, education, areas of public service, and special qualifications for membership. If you are nominating yourself, please include a letter of recommendation; if nominating another, please include assurance that the nominee is willing to serve.

Please submit names for consideration as soon as possible. Nominations must be in the Council’s San Francisco office no later than Friday, October 6, 1989.

I nominate _____
as a member of the California Council for the Humanities.

Professional Title: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Nominated By: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Send to:
CCH, 312 Sutter St., Suite 601, San Francisco, CA 94108

CCH Welcomes Two New Staff Members

In August CCH will welcome two new staff members. Sarah Holliday will be the new Administrative Assistant and Joanne Huddleston will be the editor. The CCH staff and board members look forward to working with them. Former administrative assistant Pamela Lynch, who was with CCH for seven years, will take a new position with the Marin Community Foundation in Larkspur. Carol Murphy, the editor for three and a half years, will do freelance editing from her new home in Cotati. We wish them success in their new endeavors.

CCH Remembers Founding Member Glenn Dumke

Glenn S. Dumke, who served as chancellor of The California State University from 1961-1982 and was a founding member of the California Council for the Humanities, died in Los Angeles on June 29. As one of the nine founding members of CCH, Dr. Dumke helped shape the spirit and structure of the CCH program. His forty-year career in higher education included twenty years as chancellor of the sixteen-campus CSU system. He was one of the principal architects of “A Master Plan for Higher Education in California, 1960-1975,” which became the blueprint for higher education in California. Although he retired from the Council in 1977, Dr. Dumke continued his support of CCH activities and was a guest of honor at the Ten Year Anniversary celebration at the Huntington Library in 1986.

CALIFORNIA COUNCIL FOR THE HUMANITIES

312 Sutter Street
Suite 601
San Francisco, CA 94108
415/391-1474

315 W. Ninth Street
Suite 1103
Los Angeles, CA 90015
213/623-5993

MORTON ROTHSTEIN, Chair
Professor of History, UC Davis

CARROLL PARROTT BLUE
*Assistant Professor of Film
San Diego State University*

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*Civic Leader
San Francisco*

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NEXT PROPOSAL DEADLINE: October 1, 1989

Proposals for this deadline must conform to the 1989 Program Announcement. Send 10 copies of all proposals to the San Francisco office by the due date.

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Theme of "Community" Discussed at Annual Public Humanities Conference

The annual Public Humanities Lecture and Conference was held on June 2 and 3 on the campus of California State University, Fullerton. Dr. Robert Bellah, Professor of Sociology at UC Berkeley and co-author of *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*, gave the 1989 Public Humanities Lecture, "The Humanities and the Survival of Community" on Friday evening. On Saturday, June 3, the Public Humanities Conference continued with the theme of "community" and invited participants to discuss their ideas and experiences with Dr. Bellah and with each other.

Many of the participants in this day-long conference had been a part of the planning meetings for the conference held last November and in January of this year. As reported in the previous issue of *Humanities Network*, these representatives of Orange County's libraries, museums, historical societies, and other cultural institutions met with CCH staff and began a dialogue about what community meant to them. Their definitions of community as well as their experiences of community were shared with Dr. Bellah prior to his June 2 lecture. As a result of this planning and preparation, the series of presentations and discussions that are included here are the continuation of an exchange that began many months prior to the actual public event.

In *Habits of the Heart*, Dr. Bellah wrote that "cultures are dramatic conversations about things that matter to their participants, and American culture is no exception." CCH learned through its contact with people in Orange County that the idea and the experience of community means a great deal to them in their personal and professional lives. By publishing excerpts from Dr. Bellah's lecture and the discussions that followed, we are inviting a new audience to join the conversation.



Robert Bellah participates in the discussion of "Community in Orange County?" at the Public Humanities Conference.

The complete text of Dr. Bellah's lecture together with a follow-up discussion with a panel of Orange County community leaders has been re-printed in a separate monograph, "The Humanities and the Survival of Community," which is available for \$3.50 from the CCH office. Apart from some excerpts from the lecture that are included here, the material in the monograph does not appear in this issue of *Humanities Network*.

The staff of CCH, and particularly Susan Gordon who coordinated the two planning meetings as well as the conference itself, are grateful for the cooperation and support generously provided by CSU Fullerton. We would also like to thank the people of Orange County whose questions, insights, and continued good will helped make this conference a success.